

Sayyiduna Ali & Sayyidah Fatimah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

Introduction

Zādhān ؓ says, “I heard Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ at the public square entreating the people, ‘Who seen Rasūlullāh ؓ at Ghadīr Khum declaring what he declared?’ 13 men (Ṣaḥābah ؓ) stood up and gave testimony that they heard Rasūlullāh ؓ declaring, ‘Whoever’s friend I am, ‘Alī is his friend. O Allah! Befriend who befriends him and adopt hostility to the one who shows him hostility.’”

We take great pleasure in presenting before you a brief biography of the friend of the believers, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ, and his blessed wife, the queen of the women of Jannah, Sayyidah Fāṭimah ؓ. Their lives will be divided into 3 distinct sections. 1. During the lifetime of Rasūlullāh ؓ, 2. At the time of the 3 Rightly Guided Khulafā’, and 3. ‘Alī as Khalīfah.

Section One: During the lifetime of Rasūlullāh ؓ

Birth, Name, Lineage, Kunyah & Physical Characteristics

Ten years before the sun of nubuwwah rose, was born the lion of Allah; ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the paternal cousin of Rasūlullāh ؓ. His mother Fāṭimah bint Asad named him Asad (Lion) after his maternal grandfather, but his father Abū Ṭālib did not approve of this name and changed it to ‘Alī.

His kunyah (agnomen) was Abu al-Ḥasan after his eldest son Sayyidunā Ḥasan ؓ. He was also known by Abu Turāb (Sandman), a loving agnomen given to him by Rasūlullāh ؓ and there was no name more beloved to him than it.

Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ was of average height, if not on the short side, with wide black eyes, a handsome face, a large belly, broad shoulders, large hands, and a neck like silver brocade. He was bald, with no hair on his head except at the back, and his beard was large and thick. The bones of his shoulders were like the bones of a strong lion. His arms and hands were very powerful. When he walked in battle, he almost ran, and he looked steadfast, strong and brave.

Being Raised in the House of Nubuwwah and Accepting Islam

One of the exceptional blessings that Allah ؓ bestowed upon Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ was that he was raised and educated by the favourite of Allah ؓ. A severe crisis befell the Quraysh and Abū Ṭālib had many dependants so Rasūlullāh ؓ approached Abū Ṭālib and proposed to take care of one of his

dependants which he agreed to. Rasūlullāh ﷺ took 'Alī home. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ thus acquired his nurturing in the house of Rasūlullāh ﷺ until his Prophethood. He then believed in him and followed him. The scholarly view is that the first child to embrace Islam was Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ has the great privilege of being nurtured in the worship of Allah by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Rasūlullāh's ﷺ care for him increased after he became Muslim. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the main influence that impacted his character and enhanced his talents, purifying his heart, enlightening his mind, and reviving his soul. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the gushing spring from which 'Alī ﷺ took his knowledge, education and erudition.

Most Significant Service to Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Makkah & Hijrah to Madīnah

The most significant service to Rasūlullāh ﷺ that he rendered in the Makkan Period was definitely his readiness to sleep in Rasūlullāh's ﷺ bed on the night of hijrah. The tribe of Quraysh had met in Dar al-Nadwah and conspired to kill Rasūlullāh ﷺ and Allah ﷻ informed him of that. Rasūlullāh ﷺ told Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, "Sleep in my bed. Wrap yourself in this green cloak of mine and sleep in it, and no harm will befall you from them." Who could dare to stay in that bed when his enemies were surrounding the house, lying in wait in order to kill him? No one except the most courageous by the grace of Allah ﷻ, the lion of Allah, Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ.

Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ states that Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ sold himself that night, when he put on Rasūlullāh's ﷺ garment and then slept in his place. Concerning him and others who strove to attain Allah's pleasure, Allah ﷻ revealed the words:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to [His] bondsmen.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ additionally ordered him to stay in Makkah for a few days in order to return the trusts and items that had been deposited with him for safekeeping to their respective owners among his enemies without subtracting anything. This highlights Sayyidunā 'Alī's ﷺ honesty and trustworthiness and Rasūlullāh's ﷺ faith and reliance in him.

The next morning, the Quraysh were frustrated at Rasūlullāh's ﷺ escape and rebuked and beat Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ and then detained him in the Haram. But his joy at Rasūlullāh's ﷺ escape was more important to him than any harm that could befall him. After spending three days in Makkah returning the trusts to their owners, he set out on his hijrah journey with no mount to ride and no companion to cheer him up. He hid by day and travelled by night until he reached Madīnah with swollen feet and broken skin. Travelling during the day was intolerable due to the scorching heat and walking at night in the intense darkness was very lonely and frightening. Add to this that he covered the distance on foot, you will realise the extent of hardship endured because of the roughness of the route and the hardships of travel. This was the hijrah of Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ filled with sacrifice, patience and courage.

The Life of Fāṭimah before Marriage and her Outstanding Virtues

Sayyidah Fāṭimah is the youngest and most beloved daughter of Rasūlullāh. She was born when Rasūlullāh was 35 years of age. She was nurtured in the blessed home of Rasūlullāh and reached maturity in the care of her beloved mother. Her famous titles are Zahrā' and Batūl. She is known as her father's daughter for she impersonated Rasūlullāh's character and personality. Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah declares: "I have not seen anyone who resembled Rasūlullāh more in his ways, mannerisms and etiquette—the way he stood and sat—than Fāṭimah, the daughter of Rasūlullāh." She also stated: "I have not seen anyone who resembled Rasūlullāh more in speech and dialogue than Fāṭimah. When she would visit Rasūlullāh, he would stand up, kiss her, welcome her, take her hand and make her sit in his seat. And when Rasūlullāh would visit her, she would stand up to welcome him and kiss his hand."

Sayyidah Fāṭimah embraced Islam with her mother Sayyidah Khadījah and supported her father. Very famous is the grievous incident of his enemies throwing the intestines of a camel onto his back while he was in Sajdah. It was Sayyidah Fāṭimah who hastened to rescue her father and pulled the intestines off his back and thereafter cursed the Quraysh. After completing his ṣalāh, Rasūlullāh also cursed them, taking them by name. Majority of them were killed in the Battle of Badr. After Rasūlullāh made hijrah, he sent Zayd ibn Ḥārithah and Abū Rāfi' to bring Fāṭimah to Madīnah.

- ✓ Rasūlullāh declared, "The best women of Jannah are Khadījah, Fāṭimah, Maryam (bint 'Imrān) and Āsiyah bint Muzāḥim."
- ✓ Another narration contains the wording: "After Maryam bint 'Imrān, the queens of the women of Jannah are Fāṭimah, Khadījah and then Āsiyah bint Muzāḥim."
- ✓ Rasūlullāh has stated: "Fāṭimah my daughter is the queen of the women of my ummah,"
- ✓ And he said: "Fāṭimah will be the queen of the women of Jannah."

The Marriage of 'Alī to Fāṭimah (Shawwāl 2 A.H.)

Sayyidunā 'Alī was a man of little wealth and was shy to propose to Rasūlullāh for Sayyidah Fāṭimah. After being encouraged by his freed slave woman, he mustered up the courage and went to Rasūlullāh to propose. Rasūlullāh told him to give her his shield worth 400 dirhams as *mahr* (dowry) since he possessed no other wealth. The nikāḥ of the queen of the women of Jannah was thus contracted in 2 A.H., some time after the Battle of Badr.

Various Ṣaḥābah assisted in the marriage. For instance, Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah and Sayyidah Umm Salamah assisted in preparing and decorating the matrimonial home. Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah confesses, "We did not witness a wedding more exquisite than that of Fāṭimah." Sayyidunā Sa'd provided a ram for the walimah and several of the Anṣār collected barley for the feast. Rasūlullāh gave Sayyidah Fāṭimah a trousseau of a velvet garment, a waterskin, a pillow stuffed with grass, a grinder, a leather skin and two jars.

After solemnising the marriage and before the couple met, Rasūlullāh called for water and performed wuḍū' with it. He then poured it on Sayyidunā 'Alī and supplicated, "O Allah, bless them and bestow blessing upon them and bless their offspring." As a result, Allah blessed them with 4 beautiful children viz. Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Zaynab, and Umm Kulthūm.

Simplicity in their Lifestyle

The highlight of this sacred union, through which the progeny of Rasūlullāh ﷺ survived, was simplicity; a life in which they survived on very little, a life of patience and striving. Just to get a glimpse of this, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ himself relates, “I married Fāṭimah, the daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and she and I had no furnishings apart from the skin of a ram on which we slept at night and placed fodder on for the camel during the day.”

Rasūlullāh ﷺ had decided that his daughter will handle internal household chores while Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ will handle external household chores. The incident of Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ requesting for a servant from Rasūlullāh ﷺ due to the hardships she was undergoing in domestic work is known by many. Rasūlullāh ﷺ at the time could not give them a servant since the ahl al-ṣuffah were more deserving and more in need. He later came to Fāṭimah and ‘Alī and advised them of a prescription taught to him by Sayyidunā Jibrīl ﷺ. “Should I not tell of you of something that is better?” he said. “Following every prayer, recite *Subḥānallah* 10 times, *Alḥamdulillah* 10 times and *Allāhu Akbar* 10 times. When you retire to bed, recite *Subḥānallah* 33 times, *Alḥamdulillah* 33 times and *Allāhu Akbar* 34 times.” ‘Alī comments, “I never stopped doing that since the time I heard it from Rasūlullāh ﷺ. “Not even on the night of Ṣiffīn,” he was asked. “Not even on the night of Ṣiffīn,” he answered.

Living in this poverty is a practical manifestation that the main factor for a Muslim is concern for the Ākhirah, as this life is only temporary. The households which were lofty in Islam; their women folk lived with simplicity. It is appropriate to mention here that primarily Rasūlullāh ﷺ declined the request for a slave. When conditions became better at a later stage, Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ a slave. There is no contradiction between the reports.

The Ḥadīth of the Cloak and the Verse of Purification

Sayyidah ‘Āishah ﷺ relates, “Rasūlullāh ﷺ went out one morning wearing a striped cloak of black camel hair. He enfolded ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn in it and then recited:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

Allah wishes only to remove impurity from you, O Ahl al-Bayt and to purify you with extensive purification.

Firstly, this proves false the idea that the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ concealed the virtues of Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt. Here is Sayyidah ‘Āishah ﷺ—who they claim hated him—narrating this virtue of Sayyidunā ‘Alī and Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ.

Secondly, this Qur’ānic passage is addressed to all the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as it starts and ends with them. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ إِي وَادْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَى فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ

O Nabī! Say to your wives ... And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ wished to include other members of his family in this virtue of purification, so he wrapped the four in the cloak and prayed for them too. Just as ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn ﷺ are part of the Ahl al-Bayt, the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are also part of the Ahl al-Bayt. Apart from the mothers of the believers, the term Ahl al-Bayt includes four families viz. the progeny of ‘Alī, the progeny of Ja‘far, the progeny of ‘Aqīl, and the progeny of ‘Abbās.

The Most Important Exploits of 'Alī in Madīnah

Al-Nawawī states, “The historians are unanimous that Sayyidunā ‘Alī was present at Badr and all the major events except Tabūk.”

Badr (Ramaḍān 2 A.H.): The Battle of Badr is the decisive battle between truth and falsehood. The battle began with duels between ‘Utbaḥ ibn Rabī‘ah, Shaybah ibn Rabī‘ah and Walīd ibn ‘Utbaḥ on the kuffār side and Sayyidunā ‘Alī, Sayyidunā Ḥamzah, and Sayyidunā ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib on the side of the Muslims. All three polytheists were slain by the will of Allah, and Sayyidunā ‘Ubaydah was fatally wounded.

Al-Bukhārī narrates that ‘Alī said, “I will be the first one to kneel before the Most Merciful in a dispute on the Day of Resurrection.” Qays ibn ‘Ubādah said, “Concerning them, the verse was revealed:

هٰذَيْنِ خَصَمْنِ احْتَصَمُوا فِي رَبِّهِمْ

These two opponents (believers and disbelievers) dispute with each other about their Lord.

He said, “They are the ones who went forth for duels on the day of Badr: Ḥamzah, ‘Alī, ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Ḥārith, Shaybah ibn Rabī‘ah, ‘Utbaḥ ibn Rabī‘ah, and Walīd ibn ‘Utbaḥ.

These duels were just the beginning of a splendid victory for the Muslims and humiliation for the disbelievers. Sayyidunā ‘Alī has the great honour of participating in this epic battle and securing Allah’s forgiveness and his abode in Jannah.

Uḥud (Shawwāl 3 A.H.): The fighting in the Battle of Uḥud began with a duel between Sayyidunā ‘Alī and Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Uthmān, the bearer of the banner of the polytheists. ‘Alī struck him and cut off his foot but did not finish him off for he adjured him by the ties of kinship to spare his life.

During the battle, Sayyidunā ‘Alī raised the banner of the Muslims following the martyrdom of Sayyidunā Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Umayr. Sayyidunā ‘Alī then went onto kill many of the polytheists despite the hardships that befell the Muslims.

His courage was manifested when rumours spread that Rasūlullāh had been killed. He thought that there would be nothing worth living for after Rasūlullāh was gone so he broke the scabbard of his sword and attacked the enemy with all his might until they opened up a pathway before him, and suddenly he spotted Rasūlullāh. He stood firm with Rasūlullāh and defended him heroically, receiving sixteen blows on that day. He was also the one who took the hand of Rasūlullāh and helped him up when the latter fell into a pit on the day of Uḥud. He along with Sayyidah Fāṭimah treated the wounds Rasūlullāh sustained, stopping the flow of blood running down his face and beard.

Subsequent to this battle, he participated in Ḥamrā’ al-Asad, regarded as the completion of Uḥud. Allah has spoken highly of the participants of this expedition and duly praised them:

الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

Those who answered [the Call of] Allah and the Messenger (to advance to Ḥamrā’ al-Asad) after being wounded (in Uḥud), for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah, there is a great reward.

Khandaq (Shawwāl 5 A.H.): His attitude in the Battle of the Trench was heroic and brilliant. Some enemy cavalry crossed a weak point in the ditch. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ with a few horsemen raced to confront them. ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd Wudd, known for his powerfulness and fearlessness, was part of this cavalry. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ first invited him to believe in Allah. After his refusal, he called him to a duel. ‘Amr declined saying, “I do not want to kill you.” “But by Allah, I want to kill you,” countered ‘Alī. They fought, circling one another until Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ overpowered him and finished him off; and their cavalry fled, bursting headlong in flight across the trench. Just to get an idea of how significant a soldier ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd Wudd was, the polytheists proposed to pay 10 000 dirhams for his corpse. Rasūlullāh ﷺ did in fact release his corpse, but did not accept the ḥarām wealth.

Ḥudaybiyyah (Dhū al-Qa‘dah 6 A.H.): Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was responsible for writing the document, drawing up a treaty between the Muslims and Quraysh. He also participated in the Pledge of Riḍwān, for whom exemption from Hellfire is assured; and the pleasure of Allah, the ultimate accomplishment.

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

Certainly was Allah pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you, [O Muhammad], under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquillity upon them and rewarded them with an imminent conquest.

Khaybar (Muḥarram 7 A.H.): The climax of his feats was reached at Khaybar. Rasūlullāh ﷺ, with an army 1400 strong, headed towards Khaybar and started besieging and conquering the fortresses there one by one. But the fortress of Ḥusn Qamūṣ held out against the Muslims. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “I shall give this flag to a man at whose hands Allah will grant victory. He loves Allah and His Messenger and Allah and His Messenger love him.” When morning came, all of the people went to the messenger hoping to be the flag-bearer. Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked for ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. He was suffering from an eye infection so they submitted, “He has a problem in his eyes.” They sent for him and he was brought. Rasūlullāh ﷺ applied his saliva to his eyes and prayed for him and he was healed, until it was as if there had been no pain in him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ then gave him the flag and ‘Alī ﷺ submitted, “O Messenger of Allah! Shall I fight them until they become like us?” “Advance cautiously until you reach their open space,” Rasūlullāh ﷺ instructed, “then invite them to Islam and tell them of their duties before Allah. By Allah, if Allah were to guide one man through you, that would be better for you than having red camels.”

Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ proceeded and carried out these instructions. He then breached the impressive fort and at his hands did Allah ﷻ grant the Muslims victory. Another highlight of his daring is that he faced their king Marḥab, a gallant warrior. He struck the king’s head and left him lifeless in a puddle of his own blood.

Ḥunayn (Shawwāl 8 A.H.): After the initial setback at Ḥunayn, it was Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ along with other Muhājirīn and Anṣār who stood firm with Rasūlullāh ﷺ. In the army of the Hawāzin was a man on a red camel with a black flag who was wreaking havoc in the ranks of the Muslims. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ with his military brilliance and lengthy experience realised that this man was an influential factor in motivating the Hawāzin to put up a tough fight. He and a man of the Anṣār advanced to

attack him. They managed to topple him from his camel and exterminate him. Not long thereafter, the Hawāzin were defeated and the Muslims were triumphant.

Tabūk (Rajab 9 A.H.): The last expedition of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was Tabūk. He appointed Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ in charge of Madīnah in his absence. At this, the hypocrites began passing nasty remarks about Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ caught up with the army and complained to Rasūlullāh ﷺ about this. Rasūlullāh ﷺ consoled him, “Your position to me is like the position of Hārūn to Mūsā except that there is no nabī after me.” That is just as Sayyidunā Mūsā ﷺ appointed Sayyidunā Hārūn ﷺ his successor when he went to Mount Ṭūr, I am appointing you my successor in my absence.

Hamadān in Yemen & Appointment as a Judge: Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was then deputed to Hamadān in Yemen to give them da’wah. He read to them the letter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, hearing which all of Hamadān became Muslim in one day. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was informed of this and expressed his gratitude to Allah and prayed for peace upon Hamadān.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ also directed him to judge between the people. When he complained of his tender age and inexperience on judicial matters, Rasūlullāh ﷺ placed his hand on his chest and prayed, “O Allah, make his tongue steadfast and guide his heart.” He educated him, “O ‘Alī, when two disputants sit before you, do not pass judgment between them until you listen to the second one the way you listen to the first one. If you do that, you will know what the correct judgement is.” ‘Alī ﷺ confesses, “I never had any confusion concerning a judgment after that.”

That is why we hear from the pulpits every Friday, “And the best of them in judgement is ‘Alī.” Sayyidunā ‘Umar would say, “‘Alī is the most proficient in judicial matters.” ‘Alqamah reports from ‘Abd Allah, “We would declare that the best in judgement from the residents of Madīnah was ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ.”

Farewell Pilgrimage (Dhū al-Ḥijjah 10 A.H.): Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ then caught up with Rasūlullāh ﷺ during Ḥajjat al-Wadā’. Rasūlullāh ﷺ sacrificed 63 of his 100 camels and allowed ‘Alī ﷺ to sacrifice the rest. Subsequently, he returned to Madīnah and lived there till Rasūlullāh’s ﷺ demise.

The Last days of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ fell ill, Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ was naturally shattered as their bond was very strong and Rasūlullāh ﷺ was her greatest moral support. His illness was very challenging for her. During one of his final days, Rasūlullāh ﷺ whispered to her and informed her of his imminent demise which made her sad and she began to weep. He then comforted her by notifying her that she will be the first of his family members to join him and that she is the queen of the Muslim women and she will be the queen of Jannah. She smiled upon hearing this good news.

Finally, Rasūlullāh ﷺ left this temporary abode for the eternal one in 11 A.H. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ had the great honour of washing the blessed body of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and lowering him into his place of rest.

Section Two: 'Alī at the time of the Rightly Guided Khulafā'

The Khilāfah of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq

Sound reports state that Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام pledged allegiance to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام in the very beginning. The narration of Abu Sa'īd al-Khudrī عليه السلام affirms this. Ibn al-Khuzaymah wrote out the ḥadīth and read it to Imam Muslim, author of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and described the narration a *priceless treasure*. Ibn Kathīr and a number of scholars narrated that Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام renewed his bay'ah six months after the first oath, after the demise of Sayyidah Fāṭimah عليها السلام, and there are sound reports about this. Some narrators thought that Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام had not sworn allegiance before that, so they denied the earlier bay'ah. However, what is proven taken precedence over what is denied.

'Alī and Zubayr عليه السلام said, "The only thing that disappointed us was that we were not consulted [as they were not in Saqīfah Banī Sā'idah at the time the discussion took place], but we believe that Abū Bakr is the most qualified of the people for it (khilāfah) after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He was his companion in the cave and the second of two, and we know of his honourable position and seniority. Rasūlullāh ﷺ commanded him to lead the prayer when he was still alive."

'Alī's Support for Abū Bakr

Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام always remained in the close company of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام; in fact, he never missed performing a single ṣalāh behind him. He joined with him in consultation and running the affairs of the Muslims. He accepted gifts from him, referred cases to him for judgement, prayed behind him, loved him, and hated those who hated him. There was constant interaction between them, as well as friendship and complete harmony.

When the army of Sayyidunā Usāmah عليه السلام was despatched to fight the Romans and Madīnah was in danger, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام appointed Sayyidunā 'Alī, Zubayr, Ṭalḥah, and 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ūd عليه السلام in charge of the troops placed to protect Madīnah's entrances and watch out for approaching armies. It should be noted that Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام also joined the army in the campaign to Banū Ḥanīfah, the epic battle of Yamāmah against Musaylamah al-Kadhāb.

There are many signs proving Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام sincerity, his keenness to protect the position of the Khalīfah and to uphold Muslim unity. One clear sign is his advice when he heard that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام was determined to go to fight the apostates in Dhū al-Qiṣṣah and lead the military campaign against them himself. Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام recognised the danger this posed to the survival of Islam so he addressed Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, "Where are you off to, O khalīfah of Allah's Messenger? I will tell you the very same thing Rasūlullāh ﷺ told you on the Day of Uḥud; sheathe your sword and do not afflict us with your demise. By Allah, if we were to lose you, Islam will never prosper after that."

Many reports indicate that he gave precedence to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام over everyone else. For example: Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah narrates: I asked my father ('Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib), "Who is the best person after Allah's Messenger?" He said, "Abū Bakr." I asked, "Who then?" He said, "Then 'Umar." "I was afraid he would say 'Uthmān, so I said, 'Then you?'" He said, "I am only an ordinary Muslim."

Abū Bakr, Fāṭimah, and the Estate of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

After Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ came to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ to ask for her share of inheritance from Rasūlullāh ﷺ, mentioning his land in Fadak and his share of Khaybar. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ quoted the declaration of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, “We prophets are not inherited from. What we leave behind is charity.” He then assured her, “The provision of the family of Muḥammad ﷺ will come from this wealth.” He also confirmed that he will do exactly what Rasūlullāh ﷺ did and not move an inch away from that, lest he go astray. And he did just that. He followed the example of the Messenger ﷺ par excellence. He collected the produce of Fadak and Khaybar and distributed it among the needy relatives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, including Sayyidah Fāṭimah and Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ.

Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ was initially unaware of the prophetic statement. When Abū Bakr ﷺ quoted the ḥadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and explained the matter to her, she gave up her demand. This is evidence that she accepted the truth of what he said.

However, the Rawāfiḍ went to extremes with the inheritance issue and levelled nasty allegations against Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar ﷺ in particular and the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ in general, ignoring the sound reports of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had declared, “My heirs should not share out any dīnār that I leave behind. Whatever I have left, after the maintenance of my wives and the remuneration of my agent, is charity.” Imām Ja‘far Ṣādiq said ﷺ “The wealth of the Ambiyā’ of Allāh ﷺ is not inherited. They do not leave gold and silver coins behind as inheritance. Their knowledge is inherited.” Thus, according to the Imām of the Shī‘ah, the answer of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was correct and his stance was accurate.

The following will totally debunk the drivel of the Rawāfiḍ. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ had requested Rasūlullāh ﷺ to make him the trustee to distribute the *khums* (fifth) to the Ahl al-Bayt during his lifetime and Rasūlullāh ﷺ agreed to it. He says, “I would distribute the fifth among the Banū Hāshim in the lifetime of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Thereafter, Abū Bakr made me the trustee to distribute the fifth, thus I would distribute it among the Banū Hāshim in his lifetime as well. Then, ‘Umar made me the trustee over the distribution of the fifth. I thus distributed it to the Banū Hāshim in his lifetime as well until the last year of his khilāfah.”

Thus, the Banū Hāshim received their share from the fifth and from the wealth of fay’ in the era of the three Khulafā’ ﷺ just as they received it in the lifetime of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The distribution of the wealth had been entrusted to Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ by the Khulafā’. From the above, it is evidently clear that Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ and the other relatives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ would receive their respective shares without any deficiency whatsoever. This exonerates the Khulafā’ from the despicable allegations the Shī‘ah level against them, that they usurped the rights of the Ahl al-Bayt, etc.

Fāṭimah was pleased with Abū Bakr

Sayyidah Fāṭimah ﷺ was pleased with Abū Bakr ﷺ. He visited her in her last illness and said, ‘By Allah, I never forsook my property, my wealth, my family, and my tribe except to seek the pleasure of Allah and His Messenger and the pleasure of the Ahl al-Bayt.’ He kept saying kind words to her until she was pleased with him. The one who sincerely loves her cannot afford but to be pleased with whoever she is pleased with.

Demise of Fāṭimah

Sayyidah Fāṭimah passed away on Monday night, 3rd of Ramaḍān 11 A.H. between Maghrib and 'Ishā at the age of 28/29 years. Sayyidah Asmā' bint 'Umays arranged her ghusl with other women like Salmā, the wife of Abū Rāfi', and Umm Ayman.

Sayyidah Fāṭimah was not pleased with women being covered just by a cloth and desired more concealment. So Sayyidah Asmā' suggested that a bier be prepared with some fresh palm leaves covered in a cloth which pleased Sayyidah Fāṭimah greatly. Fāṭimah was the first woman in Islam whose bier was covered in this manner.

When her bier was brought, Sayyidunā 'Alī told Sayyidunā Abū Bakr to go forward to lead the ṣalāt al-janāzah, saying, "By Allah, no one but you will lead the prayer over her." So Abū Bakr led the funeral prayer for her and she was buried at night in Jannah al-Baqī'. She passed away six months after Rasūlullāh's demise. May Allah be pleased with her and make her happy.

In her last days, Sayyidah Fāṭimah made a bequest to her husband, "After I pass away, if you wish to remarry, then marry my niece, Umāmah." Sayyidunā 'Alī honoured this request and married Sayyidah Umāmah bint Abī al-Āṣ, daughter of Zaynab bint al-Rasūl. Although, besides Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, there is no human from the sons of Ādam to have the honour of marrying two daughters of a nabī besides him and thus he was given the unique title *Dhū al-Nūrayn* (the possessor of the Two Lights), Sayyidunā 'Alī also secures the virtue of Dhū al-Nūrayn through a different angle for he enjoys the privilege of marrying the daughter and granddaughter of Rasūlullāh, Sayyidah Fāṭimah and Sayyidah Umāmah.

Demise of Abū Bakr: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then passed away. When news of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr's demise reached him, Sayyidunā 'Alī came rushing in, weeping. He said, inter alia, "May Allah have mercy on you, O Abū Bakr. You were a close friend of the messenger of Allah, one with whom he felt at ease, in whom he confided and whom he consulted. You were the first of people to become Muslim and the most sincere in faith, the most pious, and the most fearing of Allah." After his passing on, Sayyidunā 'Alī married his widow Sayyidah Asmā' bint 'Umays. Moreover, Asmā' had a son from Abū Bakr whose name was Muḥammad. Muḥammad was nurtured and raised in Sayyidunā 'Alī's home. This is a glaring evidence of their harmonious relationship.

The Time of 'Umar al-Fārūq

Sayyidunā 'Umar al-Fārūq became khalīfah in 13 A.H. Sayyidunā 'Alī loved him and cared for him and 'Umar loved 'Alī dearly. There was mutual trust and friendship between them. Sayyidunā 'Alī was a prominent member of the consultative committee of Sayyidunā 'Umar's State. Indeed, he was the main consultant. Despite this, the enemies of Islam insist on falsifying history and narrating false reports creating the impression that hatred and enmity existed between them. This is the furthest from the truth as will be proven by the following.

Sayyidunā 'Alī would wear a certain robe very often. When asked the reason, he explained, "I was given this garment to wear by my brother and close friend 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. He was sincere to Allah and Allah rewarded him." Then he wept. Amazing is the love they shared.

On the other hand, Sayyidunā ‘Umar ؓ had faith in Sayyidunā ‘Alī’s ؓ understanding of Islam and wisdom and had a high opinion of him. It is proven that he stated, “‘Alī is the most proficient in judicial matters.” He would supplicate, “I seek refuge with Allah from a problem that Abū al-Ḥasan (‘Alī) cannot handle.” He had so much of reliance in Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ that he consulted him in a number of governmental and judiciary matters. He consulted with him when the Muslims besieged Jerusalem, when Madā’in was conquered, when ‘Umar wanted to head towards Nahāwand to fight the Persians, when he wanted to go out to fight the Byzantines, when he wanted to establish the Islamic calendar and at many other times. He appointed him in charge of Madīnah in his absence; when he went out to the water of Sarrā’ intending to proceed to Qādisiyyah; when he advanced to Bayt al-Maqdis to conquer it; and when he took the wives of Rasūlullāh ؐ for Ḥajj in 23 A.H.

Marriage of ‘Umar to Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī

The greatest proof of the mutual love, honour, and trust between Sayyidunā ‘Alī and Sayyidunā ‘Umar ؓ is that the former gave his daughter Umm Kulthūm, the daughter of Fāṭimah and the granddaughter of Rasūlullāh ؐ, to Sayyidunā ‘Umar ؓ in marriage. This was an acknowledgement of his good character and a demonstration of the strong and good relationship that existed between them—which burn the hearts of the envious enemies of the ummah and rub their noses in the dust.

After this marriage, Sayyidunā ‘Umar would express his joy, exclaiming: “Will you not congratulate me? I heard Rasūlullāh ؐ saying, ‘On the Day of Qiyāmah, every connection and relationship will cease except my connection and relationship.’” ‘Umar would then say, “I have had the companionship of Rasūlullāh ؐ; I would like also to have this [kinship].” Two children were born from this marriage, namely Zayd and Ruqayyah.

This fact is a great stumbling block for those who claim hatred and enmity between the Ahl al-Bayt and Ṣaḥābah ؓ, especially those who fabricate narrations trying to prove that Sayyidunā ‘Umar tortured Sayyidah Fāṭimah ؓ, threatened her, burned her house, ruthlessly beat her up resulting in the miscarriage of her foetus, etc. etc. May Allah forbid! All their claims are baseless and untrue. If we accept this story to be true, then this is a tarnish to the self-honour and valour of Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ. Even Shī‘ī commentators say, “It is a single odd narration which is unreliable and fallacious. It cannot be fathomed with regards to the Ṣaḥābah, in fact not even with regards to any Muslim whose integrity is apparent.”

In reality, the truth is what Moulānā Ḥaydar ‘Alī has written regarding this story in his book *Muntahā al-Kalām*: “All these allegations and slanders are from senior Jews and are the fabrications of the fire-worshippers of Iran who were injured at the hands of Sayyidunā ‘Umar ؓ for whom they harbour deep enmity in their hearts.”

Demise of ‘Umar: After Sayyidunā ‘Umar ؓ was fatally stabbed, he nominated six members from the Ṣaḥābah ؓ to become his successor and chose Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ as one of them. He said, “I do not think there is anyone more deserving of that than this group with whom Rasūlullāh ؐ was pleased when he died.” After ‘Umar ibn al Khaṭṭāb ؓ was placed on his bier, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ؓ, after invoking mercy upon him, stated: “There is none with whose actions I would be more pleased to meet Allah than yours. By Allah, I have conviction that Allah will unite you with your two companions [i.e. Rasūlullāh ؐ and Abū Bakr ؓ]. This is owing to the fact that I often heard Rasūlullāh ؐ saying, ‘I, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar came, I, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar entered, I, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar left.’”

The Time of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān

The six men consultative committee held discussions over the khilāfah until the decision was reached that Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān ﷺ be appointed khilāfah. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was the second individual of this ummah to pledge allegiance to him, just after Sayyidunā ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf ﷺ. During the ‘Uthmānī khilāfah, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ served as a judge. He also carried out the ḥadd punishments and was consulted with regards to matters of the state including the conquest of North Africa.

When the turmoil faced Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān ﷺ and the rebels gathered in Madīnah and surrounded his house, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ defended Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān ﷺ to his utmost best. He sent word to him, “I have five hundred armed fighters with me; give me permission so that I can protect you against those people. You have not done anything to make it permissible to shed your blood.” Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān ﷺ replied, “May you be rewarded with good. I would not like blood to be shed on my account.” Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ instructed Ḥasan and Ḥusayn ﷺ, “Go with your swords and stand at the door of ‘Uthmān allowing no one to get to him.”

Despite the tireless efforts of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ, on Friday 18th Dhū al-Ḥijjah 35 A.H. Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān ﷺ was unlawfully and oppressively martyred at the hands of the outlaw rebels. When this disturbing news spread through Madīnah, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was devastated and rushed to Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān’s ﷺ house. In a fit of rage, he began beating his own people and scolding them for failing to protect the khalīfah. He cried uncontrollably at the loss of his close friend. He also participated in his janāzah and burial in Jannat al-Baqī’.

Love between the Khulafā’: One of the signs of the love and friendship that existed between the Ahl al-bayt and the three Khulafā’ ﷺ is that many named their sons after the Khulafā’. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was the first to name his sons Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān. His progeny maintained this noble practice. This is indicative of the admiration and veneration they cherished for the Khulafā’.

Is there anyone among the Shī‘ah today who claims to love Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ and his sons and carries this name? Are they then supporters of Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ or his opponents? Only the Ahl al-Sunnah will name their children Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān as well as ‘Alī, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, and Fāṭimah. Who are the real partisans of the Ahl al-Bayt then?

The Issue of Khilāfah: After hearing about Sayyidunā ‘Alī’s ﷺ valour and heroism, it is unfathomable that he would surrender his alleged right to the khilāfah out of fear for the Khulafā’ and tolerate their oppression and tyranny. Is it comprehensible that he stood by and did nothing while his position was allegedly being usurped; he raised no finger in defence of his wife when she was allegedly attacked by ‘Umar ﷺ; he was allegedly coerced into allowing the marriage of his daughter Umm Kulthūm to ‘Umar ﷺ; and was either complicit in or approved of the murder of ‘Uthmān? Etc.

These allegations against the Lion of Allah are more a matter of an alternative narrative, twisted by duplicitous hands, than of actual fact. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ to us the Ahl al-Sunnah is as exalted above such fabrications as his three predecessors. Acceptance of the shī‘ī version of history inevitably casts Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ into the role of a weak, spineless, and cowardly sycophant (minion). It is only the version of history upheld by the Ahl al-Sunnah and duly founded upon Qur’ān and authentic Sunnah and reliable transmission that presents Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ in the full glory that is rightfully his.

Belief regarding the Khulafā’: The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah are unanimous that the most superior in rank of the ummah is Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, and then ‘Alī.

Section Three: The Khilāfah of ‘Alī

Bay’ah to ‘Alī and his Excellent Distinctions

After the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān, all the Ṣaḥābah who were left in Madīnah swore allegiance to Sayyidunā ‘Alī as khalīfah. He was the most deserving of people after the three Khulafā’. This is the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah.

His khilāfah brought to a close the thirty year period of khalīfah in the footsteps of Rasūlullāh mentioned in the ḥadīth related by Saḥīḥ, “Khilāfah in the footsteps of the Messenger will last for thirty years, then Allah will grant power to whoever He wills.”

- ✓ Sayyidunā ‘Alī is one of the ‘asharah mubasharah, the ten individuals promised Jannah.
- ✓ Sayyidunā ‘Alī affirmed, “By the One Who split the seed and created the soul, the unlettered Messenger affirmed to me that no one loves me except a believer and no one hates me except a hypocrite.
- ✓ Rasūlullāh said, “Whoever reviles ‘Alī has reviled me.”
- ✓ Rasūlullāh affirmed, “Ḥasan and Ḥusayn will be the leaders of the youth in Jannah and their father is superior to them.”
- ✓ Rasūlullāh declared: “Regarding you O ‘Alī, you are my son-in-law, the father of my [grand] children and you are from me and I am from you.”

The status of the Glorious Qur’ān in His View; Love for Rasūlullāh and Adherence to the Sunnah

Due to his great interest in the Qur’ān, Sayyidunā ‘Alī acquired a great deal of knowledge of it and its sciences. He says, “By Allah, no verse of it was revealed but I know why it was revealed, when it was revealed, and to whom it was revealed. My Lord has blessed me with deep understanding and an eloquent truthful tongue.” He lived his life with the Qur’ān, reading it, memorising it, understanding it, and acting in accordance with it.

When Sayyidunā ‘Alī was asked, “How was your love for the Messenger of Allah?” He replied, “He, by Allah, was dearer to us than our wealth, our children, our fathers, our mothers and cold water when one is thirsty.”

Sayyidunā ‘Alī announced, “I am not a prophet, and I do not receive revelation, but I act in accordance with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of Muḥammad as much as I can.” He advised in a sermon, “Follow the guidance of your Messenger for it is the best of guidance. Follow his Sunnah, for it is the best of ways.” He also warned, “Newly invented matters are the worst.”

There is a great lesson for us all in this. Salvation most definitely lies in following the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Another point of reflection is that Sayyidunā ‘Alī confirms that the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh is the road to salvation. Not the invented ideology of the Shī’ah, which is absolute deviation heading to damnation!

His Profound Knowledge

Masrūq ﷺ stated, “I got to know the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ and I realised that the most prominent of them in knowledge were six: ‘Umar, ‘Alī, ‘Abd Allah [ibn Mas‘ūd], Abū al-Dardā, Ubay ibn Ka‘b, and Zayd ibn Thābit. Then I got to know the six and came to the realisation that the most prominent in knowledge among them were two: ‘Alī and ‘Abd Allah.”

Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was from the few Muslims who knew how to read and write in the early days of Islam. He was one of the scribes of waḥī as well. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was the most knowledgeable of the Ṣaḥābah of his time about the Sunnah. Sayyidah ‘Ā'ishah ﷺ remarked about him, “He was the most knowledgeable of the Sunnah among those who are left.” ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Ayyāsh said when asked about Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ, “He had unsurpassed knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnah.”

Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “If a person commits a sin in this world and is punished for it, Allah ﷻ is more just than to double the punishment for His slave, and if a person commits a sin in this world and Allah ﷻ conceals it and forgives him, Allah ﷻ is more kind than to look again at something that He has already forgiven.”

‘Alī’s Attitude towards the Khawārij and Shī‘ah

The Khawārij: Definition and Reports about them

According to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī ﷺ, the name Khawārij was given to the group that rebelled against the fourth Khalīfah ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ. He says, “The reason why they are called *Khawārij* (rebels) is because of their *khurūj* (rebellion) against ‘Alī, when he agreed to arbitration.” Among their characteristics is that they regard anyone who commits a major sin a disbeliever and that those who commit major sins will abide in Hell forever.

Some scholars suggest that the origins of the Khawārij go back to the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and they recognise Dhū al-Khuwayṣirah as the first of them. In a lengthy incident, he objected to the way Rasūlullāh ﷺ distributed some gold he received from Yemen. Rasūlullāh ﷺ commented as he left, “From among the progeny of this man will emerge people who recite the Book of Allah fluently, but it will not go any further than their throats. They will pass out of the faith as an arrow passes out of the prey. If I live to see them, then I will certainly kill them like the killing of Thamūd.”

Allah ﷻ bestowed the honour of fighting and killing them upon Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ. He went out to meet the Khawārij with the army that he had prepared to take to Syria. He attacked them at Nahrawān and fewer than ten of them survived. He did not fight them until they had shed blood that was protected by Sharī‘ah and attacked the property of the Muslims. He fought them in order to defend against their aggression and because of what they had demonstrated of their evil actions.

Formation and Development of the Khawārij and ‘Alī’s Attitude towards them

The Khawārij split in a large group from ‘Alī’s ﷺ army on the way back from Ṣiffīn to Kūfah. They numbered according to different reports between 8 and 14 thousand. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ was keen to bring them back to the main body of Muslims so he sent Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ to debate with them. They had 3 main objections against Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ. Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ gave them

satisfactory answers from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Two thousand of them recanted but the rest of them continued their rebellion and fought on the basis of their misguidance.

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ then went to speak to the remainder of them and they returned to Kūfah. He delivered a sermon and announced his policy towards the extremist group that he will not prevent them from praying in the Masjid, not withhold their share from the fay' as long as they are with the mainstream Muslims, and he will not fight them unless they initiate the fighting. He did not regard them as being outside of Islam so he granted them the right to be different without that leading to division or fighting.

This period of calm did not last long, though. They were hell-bent on division so they decided to split from Amir al-Mu'minīn 'Alī ﷺ and appoint their own leader. They gathered in the house of 'Abd Allah ibn Wahb al-Rāsibī and, after much deliberation, appointed him their leader. They left Kūfah and agreed to meet at the bridge over the River Jūkhi. They also wrote an open letter to those who were following their path in Baṣrah and elsewhere telling them to meet them at the river. They all congregated at Nahrawān and became powerful and strong.

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ stipulated for the Khawārij that they should not shed blood, terrorise people, or engage in banditry by attacking people on the roads. If they committed any of these transgressions, he would declare war on them. Since they regarded those who disagreed with them as disbelievers, they started to shed the blood of people whose lives were protected in Sharī'ah. They seized the son of Sayyidunā Khabbāb ﷺ and his pregnant slave woman. They slaughtered the son of Sayyidunā Khabbāb ﷺ in cold blood and slit open the belly of his slave girl. Despite their evil atrocities, Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ did not hasten to fight them. He sent word to them to hand over the killers so the ḥadd might be carried out on them. But they responded with arrogance and stubbornness saying, "All of us are killers."

The Battle of Nahrawān (Ṣafar 38 A.H)

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ marched towards them in Muḥarram 38 A.H. camping on the western bank of the river of Nahrawān, while they camped on the eastern bank. At this stage, Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ realised that these were the very Khawārij prophesised by Rasūlullāh ﷺ so he urged his army to fight them. He said, "I have been commanded to fight the renegades and these are the renegades."

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ ordered his army not to start the fighting until the Khawārij crossed the river towards the west. He sent his messengers to the Khawārij for three days urging them to recant but they refused. Messenger kept coming and going until they killed his messengers and crossed the river. The Khawārij went so far that all hope of any reconciliation was lost. They stubbornly and arrogantly refused and insisted on fighting. So 'Alī ﷺ organised his army and prepared to fight.

He ordered Sayyidunā Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī ﷺ to raise a banner of safety for the Khawārij and announce, "Whoever comes to this banner will be safe; whoever goes to Kūfah or Madā'in will be safe. We are not after any of you except those who killed our brothers." Many of their groups left, some four thousand in total. No more than 1000 men remained with 'Abd Allah ibn Wahb, the leader.

The Khawārij attacked first. Sayyidunā 'Alī's ﷺ army counter-attacked ferociously, smashing the Khawārij and slaying their leaders. The battle was short and decisive, taking a brief period of time on 9 Ṣafar 38 A.H. This swift battle resulted in the deaths of large numbers among the Khawārij ranks. The total number of martyrs from 'Alī's ﷺ companions were a minimum of 2 and a maximum

of 13 according to various reports. The reports state that all the Khawārij were slain. However, al-Mas'ūdī says that no more than 10 of the Khawārij managed to escape, after a crushing defeat.

After the end of the decisive battle, Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ instructed his companions to look for the body of the deformed one, Dhū al-Thadyah, because the presence of his body would be a sign of 'Alī being in the right and following the truth. In a report documented in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Rasūlullāh ﷺ gives a description of the Khawārij, "Their sign will be a black man, one of whose upper arms will be like a woman's breast or like a piece of quivering flesh. They will emerge when there is division among the people."

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī ﷺ, the narrator, says, "I bear witness that I heard this from Rasūlullāh ﷺ and I bear witness that 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib fought them when I was with him. He ordered that that man be sought and he was found and brought. I looked at him and saw that he was just as Rasūlullāh ﷺ had described him." His body was found beneath a heap of bodies on the riverbank. "Allāhu Akbar," Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ shouted as soon as he saw his body, "Allah spoke the truth and His Messenger conveyed it." The people also rejoiced when they saw him.

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ treated the Khawārij as Muslims, both before and after the battle. He denied them being disbelievers and hypocrites and said, "They are people who transgressed against us so we fought them." He also said, "They are people upon whom a fitnah came, and they became blind and deaf."

Origin of the Rāfiḍī Shī'ah and Growth

The first one to promote the principles of Rāfiḍī Shī'ī beliefs on which their other beliefs are based was a Jewish man from Yemen whose name was 'Abd Allah ibn Saba'. He outwardly became Muslim at the time of Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ﷺ, though hypocrisy brewed in his heart, and travelled throughout the Muslim regions to promote his corrupt beliefs and to cause mischief among the masses. He said that Rasūlullāh ﷺ will return to the world just as 'Isā ﷺ. That 'Alī is the appointed heir of Muḥammad ﷺ and the seal of the appointed heirs. That 'Uthmān took the ummah's affairs wrongfully, etc. He told his followers, "Start criticising your governors and show people that you are enjoining good and forbidding evil so that you gain people's support." He wrote to various regions to those whose beliefs he managed to corrupt and they wrote to him. He is the first person to propagate the ideology of the compulsion of the imāmah of 'Alī, to declare exemption from his enemies and to declare them as infidels.

These corrupt ideologies continued to spread among the people of misguidance and deviation and continued to have an impact on their hearts and minds until they resulted in the murder of Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ﷺ at the hands of this corrupt gang.

'Alī Deals with the Rawāfiḍ

The ideologies of the Rawāfiḍ began to appear more than before in the time of Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ until they reached him. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ denounced them in the strongest terms, disavowing them and those who believed in them. 'Alī ﷺ said, "What do I have to do with this rough black man?" referring to 'Abd Allah ibn Saba' who used to slander Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ.

Ibn Saba' claimed that 'Alī ﷺ was divine so 'Alī ﷺ burned him and his companions with fire.

‘Alī ﷺ also denounced all the other beliefs that appeared during his time under the umbrella of loving and supporting him, such as preferring him to the rest of the Ṣaḥābah and giving him precedence over Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ﷺ. The practice of reviling and disparaging the Ṣaḥābah was widespread among these misguided people. Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ burned the extreme group and said regarding those who gave him precedence, “No one who prefers me over Abū Bakr and ‘Umar is brought to me but I shall flog him as the ḥadd punishment for fabricators and liars.” It was narrated from him with more than eighty chains of transmission that he said, “The best of this ummah after its Messenger is Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar.”

Notwithstanding how ‘Alī ﷺ dealt with him, his corrupt ideologies of executorship and imāmah are wholly accepted by the Shī‘ah. The Shī‘ah are therefore not the partisans of ‘Alī ﷺ, but the partisans of the renegade hypocrite Ibn Saba’.

‘Alī’s Final Days & Demise

Towards the end of his life, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ became frustrated with his people and prayed, “O Allah, I am tired of them and they are tired of me. Relieve me of them and relieve them of me. What is keeping the most wretched of you from contaminating it with blood,” and he put his hand on his beard. He was referring to the prophecy he heard from Rasūlullāh ﷺ. During Ghazwat al-‘Ashīrah, Rasūlullāh ﷺ explained that the two most doomed people are the reddish man of Thamūd who hamstrung the she-camel and the other is the man who strikes ‘Alī on the front of the head until his beard becomes wet with blood. So Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ knew that he would be martyred.

The battle of Nahrawān left a deep wound in the souls of the Khawārij which the passage of time only made more painful and sorrowful, so a group of them decided to murder Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ in vengeance for their slain brethren. Ibn Muljim, al-Barūk ibn ‘Abd Allah, and ‘Amr ibn Abī Bakr promised to kill ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiyah, and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ respectively. After putting poison on their swords, they set out on their sinister mission and agreed to carry it out on the 17th of Ramaḍān.

Ibn Muljim struck Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ on his way for the Fajr prayer on his forehead with a fatal strike. The criminal was apprehended and brought before ‘Alī ﷺ. ‘Alī ﷺ commanded, “Detain this man. If I die, kill him and if I live, wounds equal for wounds.” His top physician, Athīr ibn ‘Amr al-Sakūnī, informed him of his imminent demise. So Sayyidunā ‘Alī ﷺ gathered his sons and gave them his parting advices.

Meanwhile in Syria, al-Barūk ibn ‘Abd Allah struck Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ on his rear. Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ was given medicine as an antidote for the poison and managed to survive. Sayyidunā ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ had a stomach-ache and could not come for Fajr that morning so he sent Khārijah ibn Ḥudhāfah to lead the people in ṣalāh. ‘Amr ibn Abī Bakr struck Khārijah and killed him thinking him to be Sayyidunā ‘Amr ﷺ. All three criminals were subsequently executed.

Sayyidunā ‘Alī’s ﷺ khilāfah lasted 4 years, 9 months, and 3 days. Allegiance was sworn to him as khilāfah on 18th Dhū al-Ḥijjah 35 A.H. and he passed away a martyr on 21 Ramaḍān 40 A.H. at the age of 63. He was washed by Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, and ‘Abd Allah ibn Ja‘far ﷺ and shrouded in 3 pieces of cloth. Ḥasan ﷺ offered his ṣalāt al-janāzah. To Allah do we belong and to him is our return.

Wives and Children: ‘Alī had a total of 8 wives and 33 children; 14 sons and 19 daughters.

Conclusion

This is the brief biography of the Conqueror of Khaybar and the Queen of the women of Jannah. May Allah ﷻ inspire us to love them, honour them, and emulate them in their virtuous attributes, actions, and achievements.

We would like to declare unequivocally that we the Ahl al-Sunnah are the true partisans of Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt. We announce their virtues documented in authentic works and promote their true life stories. We do not fabricate any virtues and do not distort history to fit our whims and fancies.

Our appeal to all is to study the lives of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ in general and Sayyidunā 'Alī and Fāṭimah ﷺ in particular. Make a concerted effort to read authentic literature on them. Shaikh 'Alī Muḥammad al-Ṣallābī has written a magnificent book on Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib his life and times. Obtain a copy and read it from cover to cover. It will reveal the true history of this illustrious son of Islam and will dispel many misrepresentations and distortions.

Vote of Thanks and Du'a'

We praise Allah ﷻ for allowing us the opportunity to speak and listen about those He declared His Pleasure upon. May Allah ﷻ grant them the greatest of reward on behalf of this ummah. May Allah (swt) allow us to love, honour and emulate them all. May he favour us with their intercession on the Day of Qiyāmah and their companionship in Jannat al-Firdaws. Āmīn.

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts (any) resentment toward those who have believed."

We would like to express our gratitude to al-Farouk Institute for arranging the Ṣaḥābah Jalsas, to the Masjid committees for hosting us and granting us the platform to deliver our message, to those present for giving us an attentive ear, and all those who contributed in any way to make this event a reality and a success. Jazākallāhu Khayran wa Bārakallāhu Fikūm. May Allah reward you abundantly and grant you all types of blessings.

Finally, we beg Allah's ﷻ forgiveness for all our sins and shortcomings and beseech Him to bless these gatherings with Divine Acceptance.

وَاخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ نَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ نَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَنَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ